

SUPPLEMENT TO THE NÚR AFSHÁN

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Editorial.

NEWS AND NOTES.

It is acknowledged by fair minded Muhammedans that the book 'Umihat ul Mominin' (Mothers of the Faithful) is unanswerable. It is said that Gulam Ahmed Qadiani is writing a reply which consists in quoting what Jews and unbelieving writers have said against the Lord Jesus. This will prove nothing. It is out of the mouth of Muhammed's friends that the Umihat ul Mominin proves Muhammed to fall far below that standard of purity which Christianity has taught even to the Muhammedan world to look for in the founder of a religion.

A controversy has been going on recently between the Brahmos and Aryas of Lahore with reference to the authority of the Vedas. *The Theist* gives a resume of the arguments used. In our opinion the Brahmos have easily overthrown the claims of the Aryas as to the miraculous origin, historicity, accuracy, and religious value of the Vedas. We may have occasion to again refer to this matter, but at present suffice it to point out that the Christian religion assumes both forms

of revelation viz. the direct or "presentative", through intuition and the "representative" through nature and the Scriptures. Our doctrine of the Holy Spirit enables us to understand and make use of both forms of revelation. The Spirit of Truth is given "to lead believers into all truth." Again, the Word of God is called "the sword of the Spirit." In other words, the Spirit of God clarifies the intuition and knowledge of God by means of the Written Word and Nature. Our sympathies are not at all with the reactionary Aryas, who adopt a mechanical theory of inspiration, but we would earnestly urge the Brahmos not to allow the false theory of the Aryas to blind them to the truth that God, who created in us the power to know Him, has also arranged to develop that power by various means, one of the chief of which is the Word in the formation and preservation and accuracy of which His Spirit has so wrought that it becomes a trustworthy instrument for the Spirit's use in His work of clarifying, purifying and ennobling unto God-likeness the human heart.

THE GOD THAT ANSWERETH BY FIRE
LET HIM BE GOD. I Kings 18: 24.

The principle enunciated by Elijah, the prophet on Mt. Carmel is of universal application. Fire is a cleans-

ing agent. The only way to infallibly drive out Plague germs is to use fire. The plague of sin has to be dealt with in the same way. Christianity is the true religion because it uses fire for sin cleansing. "He shall baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire" were the words of the second Elijah, John the Baptist, regarding the Christ whose way he came to prepare. The Holy Spirit is the fire of God from heaven that sinners may use it and be cleansed. When the Jews killed Jesus of Nazareth they thought they were victors, but again it was proven that the God who answers by fire is the true God; for on the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit like a fire descended on the disciples of Jesus and they went forth to conquer the world.

The same test is at work in India to day. Muhammedans, Hindus and Sikhs can talk a great deal about God and tell of His excellent attributes but they do not have the answer by fire which burns up the dross of sin and removes the plague germs of iniquity. It is precisely in this great work of the Holy Spirit, that Christianity stands heaven high above religions which present rival claims. The same test goes on within the Church. A mere nominal Christian may be able to talk very fluently about God but until he experiences the answer by fire in having his sins



and iniquities burnt out of his heart by the cleansing Divine Spirit; he does not really know the true God. Let the Church now say and let all non-Christians religions accept the challenge we present "*The God that answereth by fire, let him be God.*"

Current Thought.

WHY BE RELIGIOUS?

A PAPER FOR YOUNG MEN.

BY PROFESSOR MARCUS DODS, D.D.

THERE are many men who have no positive ill-will to religion, and who are quite decent and respectable in their conduct, but who have no interest at all in things unseen. Either they give an outward attendance on religious observances as a harmless traditional custom which they have not sufficient independence or perhaps sufficient interest to neglect; or they quietly glide out of all connection with religion even of this formal kind, and give themselves entirely to business and pleasure and the pursuits which attract them.

There is need then to ask the question, Why should there be such a thing as religion? Why should we not be content to eat and drink, buy and sell, if possible enjoy ourselves, and die? Why is not this earthly life with its various appeals to the senses, the mind, and the heart sufficient? Is religion a superstition which wastes our time and disappoints our hopes, is it a survival we should discard, or is it a justifiable, reasonable, necessary element in human life? Am I nearer the truth or farther from it if I am religious? Ought I or ought I not to be religious?

The first step to an answer must be the ascertainment of the meaning of the word "religion." Even in an apparently religious country like ours, there are the gravest misunderstandings of the nature of religion. If you ask our leaders in the world of thought what religion is, you will be told that it is morality touched with emotion, or morality raised to an ideal height;

or from other quarters the answer comes that to venerate the great mystery that lie at the origin of all things is religion. Religion, as actually manifested by men, is belief in and intercourse with the unseen superhuman powers that rule this world. It is man's response to the unseen power that is ever active around and within him and upon which he feels himself to be dependent. It concerns itself with our relations to the Supreme. It springs from the consciousness of some superior power with which we are somehow associated or connected, a consciousness which is awakened by what is experienced or observed in nature and in conscience; and it deals with this power as able to understand and respond to human feeling and desire, and it seeks by worship, by conduct, to come into harmonious relations with this power.

Religion exists and has existed in a vast variety of manifestations, varying according to the ideas men hold of the Supreme. The highest form of religion is that which recognises the Supreme as the Incomprehensible Spirit who underlies all existence, and at the same time is our absolutely holy and loving Father. Our religion must therefore be a religion of the spirit. To be in a real and permanent relation to the absolutely holy and loving God, we must ourselves be holy and loving. Religion concerns itself with our relation to God and our true, eternal relation to God is attained when we attain to perfect harmony with Him. This harmony must not be the merely apparent and temporary alliance which might be effected by compulsion or outward arrangement, but the thorough spiritual unanimity and abiding fellowship which result from identity of will and similarity of character. Religion is not perfect unless we are truly children of God; and until we are morally like God we can only in a superficial sense be called religious men. Religion, in short, is primarily and essentially a thing of the spirit; the true religion is that which brings us into our right relation to God.

Thus misconceiving religion, many persons abhor the thought of it; and necessarily, for instead of looking at it as the culmination of all human experiences, the best of friendships, the noblest of services; and that which alone brings perfect development to human nature, they think of it as a harsh bondage, which covers life with gloom, as the acceptance of some idle beliefs, and the spending of time and energy on silly observances, and as the introduction of an alien element into human life. So long as we

feel as if life might be enjoyable without religion, but with it must be intolerable and dreary in the extreme, so long as we do not see that nothing but religion can make life permanently tolerable, we misunderstand both life and religion. Religion is meant to make life hopeful, reasonable, and strong; and if to us it makes life harder, if it only worries us with a thousand meaningless restrictions and petty performances, it is an erroneous idea of religion we have. It is meant to give us liberty, the fullest development of our nature, and the utmost use and enjoyment of life; and if on the contrary it seems to stunt our energies, and to make us formal and even false, our religion is a mistake.

This, then, being religion, we come back to the question, Why should we be religious? Practically it is perhaps to death that we owe much of our interest in religion. It is death which to all men, and necessarily, suggests the question whether there is another world, a spiritual world, independent of flesh and other things visible. This one good at least we derive from death, that it compels us to ask what it hides and what it commits us to. As one by one men are irrecoverably removed from earth, our thoughts cannot but follow them with desire and inquiry. Each man must himself die. Each man knows that the day is coming when for himself and by himself he must make trial of the vast beyond. Suspended over the dark abyss, he cannot but question what it contains, what forms of life may there exist. Will he there be guided and shielded by an intelligent, powerful, and loving Spirit? Will he find there a life continuous with the present, governed by the same moral ideas, fulfilling similar purposes? Or will he be launched into he knows not what chaos of hostile influences, and adverse and calamitous conditions? Is his personal identity terminated, his conscious connection with things for ever broken, when he ceases to take part in this world?

But whatever be the exciting cause, the craving to find the highest Power, and to hold communion with that Power, is well-nigh universal, and certainly is a characteristic of human nature. This craving has in untutored and unsophisticated races made impossible the question, Why be religious? And if that question now needs to be put, its answer is the simple one: Because it is possible. If there is a God, if there is a Supreme, then religion is at once our duty and our happiness.

Only, then, if a man has unhappily

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become convinced that there is no guiding intelligence, no presiding purpose, in the universe, only if a man has come to believe that all things are material and mechanical, and that there is no spiritual Being who can understand and help him, can he with reason turn his back on religion. If there is God, a Being in and by whom all else lives, a Being conscious and intelligent, able to understand us, though we cannot understand how He lives or what He is; if there is One without whom we could not be, and whose will is guiding all things to one worthy end, then plainly to neglect all possible intercourse with this Being is to neglect the most important element in our life. To ascertain our true relationship to Him and to act upon it is our first duty; and as a Being of infinite wisdom must necessarily be a Being of infinite goodness, it will also be our surest happiness to know and to respond to Him. To live without acknowledging Him is to live in an unreal world. If our hopes in life take no account of God, if they leave out of account the determining factor in all affairs, with what reason can we look for success and happiness? And if, indeed, God is not only supreme, but supreme because the one eternal Being, full of wisdom and goodness, how can we defend to ourselves the state of mind which can disregard His claims, which can make nothing of gratitude, nothing of duty, nothing of the hope of holiness, and of working out the purposes of God? Religion has had the misfortune to be only once perfectly represented to men. Only once has man's relation to God been perfectly set forth and perfectly realised; only once has it been seen that religion is not a superfluous or ornamental addition to life, or a thing separable from it, but the very strength and soul of life—as needful to our higher nature as the air we breathe is needful to our bodies.

It has become fashionable in our time airily to put religion aside on the ground that we cannot affirm Personality or anything else of the Power which underlies all existence, and of which the only thing we can know is that it is unknowable. There are always many persons who cannot resist the allurements of a worldly life, who are glad to avail themselves of a good pretext for not troubling about religion, God, eternity. And there are also men who with great distress of mind come to the conclusion that nothing certain is to be known about anything, and that to profess love and service to an unknown and unknowable God is for them impossible.

Now the truth which Agnosticism affirms, that God is past finding out,

that a personal Spirit present with every one of His creatures, living personally in and through the whole material universe, is incomprehensible to our mind is precisely the Scriptural position that we know but in part and cannot find out the Almighty to perfection. And any rebuke which is calculated to abate the audacity and dogmatism of theological statement we certainly also accept with gladness. But when human inability to know *every*-thing about God is used as equivalent to inability to know anything about Him, we demur.

INVENTION.

Pictures By Wire.

On Thursday night, or rather Friday morning, March 14th, after the operators had finished their work of sending and receiving dispatches between Jacksonville and Key West, the wire was turned over to the New York Herald, to make a test of what is known as the Hummel process of sending pictures by telegraph, the latest of inventions.

The Western Union Telegraph Company furnished a wire for sending a picture from Key West by cable to Punta Rassa, a distance of 150 miles, and thence by wire to Jacksonville, and on to Savannah, Washington, Philadelphia, and New York, a total distance of 2,000 miles.

The Herald of Saturday contains the result in the shape of a picture of General Maximo Gomez and one of the cruiser Montgomery entering the harbour of Havana.

Mr. Hummel, who is a jeweller of St. Paul, Minnesota, is the inventor of a receiver and transmitter by which the pictures are sent. The receiving machine is said to look very much like a miniature printing press. The Herald describes the operation as follows:

"Clicking over the wire from the main office of the telegraph company, at 3.30 o'clock, came the message: 'We have Key West and will connect you at once.'

"Then the clicking stopped, and in a few seconds the machinery of the receiver began to move. A carriage run by a minute motor and having a projecting arm, the end holding a fine steel point, commenced moving backward and forward. Under the point, and held firm and smooth on a bed of brass, were two sheets of white paper, each four and a half

inches square, and between them carbon sheets to make a copy.

"Across the paper travelled the point, making broken lines of dots and dashes. At each trip across the point was moved by finely graduated ratchets very slightly from the line in which it had moved the preceding time.

"In Key West, the inventor, Mr. Hummel, a Herald artist, a Herald correspondent, and a telegraph operator were sitting beside the transmitter. The artist had drawn a picture on tin. He had redrawn the lines with a fine brush dipped in a solution of shellac, which is a nonconductor of electricity. A platinum point on the projecting arm of the transmitter was moving backward and forward across the picture, regulating the motion of the steel point which was moving over the paper on the brass bed of the receiving instrument in the Herald library.

"Wherever the platinum point in the transmitter touched a line of the shellac the circuit was broken, and the steel point in the receiver was thrown down in the paper tracing a line corresponding to that taken by the platinum point. When the latter passed the shellac the circuit closed again and the steel point lifted.

"Slowly the outline of a man's beard appeared on the paper. Then the chin, the nose, and the cheek bones were drawn. Hardly had the outlines of the eyes appeared when those at the receiver recognized the face of General Maximo Gomez.

"The steel point moved down to the edge of the picture a few minutes later and stopped. It had been moving just twenty-three minutes. Then the sketches were redrawn in India ink by a Herald artist and afterward they went to the engraving room and to the presses."

Telegrams.

Bombay, July 13.

During the past week the total mortality from all causes in Bombay was 523, as compared with 440 in the preceding week; increase 83. There were 53 deaths from plague as against 38 in the previous week: a rise of 15. There were 12 attacks and 7 deaths from plague yesterday.

Londond, July 12.

The Kwang rebels have captured nine towns and defeated the Chinese regulars near Wuchau, which has been placarded with pos-

ters announcing that the war is directed against the officials. The Canton authorities have purchased eight thousand rifles, and are negotiating for a supply of machine guns.

London, July 12.

General Miles and the staff have arrived at Santiago the Commander-in-Chief having a conference with Admiral Sampson immediately on his arrival.

The naval bombardment of Santiago was resumed yesterday and lasted for two hours when General Shafter signalled to the fleet that the shells were mostly falling short. The last shot fired by the fleet, however, struck a church in the heart of the city, in which were large stores and munitions of war, which exploded.

A *Times*' telegram from Madrid says that the Spanish Cabinet, being hopelessly divided, has resigned. The formation of a new Cabinet with a strong military element capable of maintaining order at home and making terms of peace, is expected.

It is semi-officially announced at Madrid that Spain will continue the struggle with American till she is able to attain an honourable peace cost whatever sacrifices it may.

The latest despatches from Santiago states that General Shafter sent a message to the Spanish commander that further resistance is hopeless, to which General Toral replied that he must again refer to Madrid for instructions.

The American investment lines were completed yesterday afternoon, the Spaniards offering little resistance.

Karachi, July 12.

Returns for the 12th show cases 3, deaths 4; totals to date, cases 3,010, deaths 2,363. In the outbreak of 1897 the cases were 4,167 and deaths 3,387 in six months, giving an average mortality of 81.04 per cent. This year the average death rate is rather less, but the outbreak has only lasted so far a little more than three months.

Allahabad, July 13.

The sequel of the Uzielli case is that a prosecution is opened against another West End doctor, long suspected. The police are determined to stop abortion operations.

London, July 13.

General Loral, in replying to General Shafter's message that further resistance by the garrison of Santiago is hopeless, reiterated his determination to resist to the last.

The Cabinet crisis at Madrid hangs fire.

A further truce has been arranged at Santiago till noon on Thursday, while General Toral, the Spanish Commander, communicates with Madrid.

The outbreak of yellow fever in the American lines is causing anxiety at Washington. The troops are also suffering from the rains, which prevent them getting the siege guns to the front.

London, July 13.

The Duke of Norfolk, Postmaster General, announces the establishment of penny postage between Great Britain and Canada, Newfoundland, the Cape, Natal and also all Crown colonies desiring to join. The *Times* concludes that India is included in this concession. The date for the reduced postage rate coming into force is not yet fixed.

London, July 13.

The prefect of Wuchau reports that fifteen hundred Imperial Chinese troops were killed

in the engagement with the rebels, and he must surrender unless reinforcement reach him by Friday. The rebels are now within thirty miles of Wuchau.

Allahabad, July 13.

Captain Evans, commanding the "Iowa," describes the reception of the Spanish prisoners after the recent sea fight. The heroism of the Spaniards was unexampled, naked and half-mangled men being lifted aboard unmurmuring; the deck afterwards running with blood. Captain Eulate, commanding the "Vizcaya," who was wounded, received full honours. His eyes were streaming with tears, while he presented his sword, which was declined, the American crew cheering frantically meanwhile.

Admiral Cervera, interviewed, says that the guns which the "Cristobal Colon," his flagship, lacked, are doubtless resting in the pockets of the Spanish Superintendent of Ordnance.

Allahabad, July 13.

The London correspondent of the *Pioneer* wires that the American steamer "Delaware" was consumed by fire in the Atlantic on Saturday; 34 of the crew and all the 33 passengers on board being saved. The crew formed lines with their clothes burning off their backs, while the women and children were placed in the boats. The Press contrasts this heroism with the cowardice shown at the "La Bourgogne" disaster last week, which is the subject of inquiry, and at which conflicting evidence is promised.

Allahabad, July 13.

The Duke of Cambridge yesterday opened the underground electric railway connecting Waterloo and the City.

The latest Manila news says that the Americans are finding the insurgents intractable.

A German gunboat has prevented the insurgents from attacking Grande Island.

Admiral Dewey has sent war ships to the scene, and the starving Spanish garrison surrendered and were delivered to the rebels despite their protests.

The Spanish Cabinet remains in office for the present. The popular sentiment in Spain is again unyielding, being encouraged by the news of the outbreak of yellow fever among the American troops in Cuba.

Santiago has surrendered after a conference between Generals Toral and Shafter, at which it was agreed that the following conditions should form the basis of capitulation.

The surrender of Santiago with the whole of Eastern Cuba from Acerradores in the south to Sagua in the north. The Americans agree to the transport of General Toral's troops to Spain in American ships, the Spanish officers retaining their swords.

London, July 14.

It is reported at Canton that Doctor Sun Yat Sen is a prominent leader of the rebellion. There is much sympathy for the rebels in Canton, but it is stated that the rebels will not advance beyond Shuching above Samshui, fearing foreign complications if Canton is attacked.

London, July 15.

The *New York Herald* states that the Government officials at Washington assert that President McKinley is not desirous of retaining the Philippines, and will be satisfied with Guam Island and a coaling station in the Far East.

Provided that Puerto Rico is ceded, and Cuba is made independent, the President will not demand a money indemnity from Spain.

The Americans will not transfer Santiago to the Cubans until the Spanish evacuate the whole of Cuba.

General Shafter reports that by the surrender of Santiago his prisoners number between twelve and fifteen thousand.

Calcutta, July 15.

Thursday's returns give 2 seizures and 5 deaths. Mr. Hill and a Eurasian woman, patients in private hospitals, are now convalescent.

Bombay, July 16.

There were 6 attacks and 6 deaths reported from plague yesterday.

London, July 18.

Communication between Marshall Blanco at Havana and Madrid has been cut.

Most of the American war-ships are now at Guantanamo, several of the ships preparing for the expedition to Puerto Rico, where General Miles will proceed shortly.

Santiago is now in charge of the Municipal authorities under the control of an American Military Governor.

President McKinley has wired to General Shafter conveying the thanks of the American people for his services at Santiago.

When the Spanish garrison of Santiago laid down their arms, General Shafter returned General Toral's sword, and afterwards rode with the Spanish Commander through the city, taking over formal possession, the ceremony at the palace being an elaborate function.

The American launches yesterday removed the mines which were laid in the harbour of Santiago.

The *Times* in an article this morning says that Britain will feel no jealousy whatever if the United States takes possession of the Philippines.

The Moorish Government is concentrating a considerable force in the vicinity of Ceuta and Melilla to guard the Morocco frontier and maintain Moorish neutrality in the Spanish-American War.

Commodore Watson's squadron will sail at the end of the week for Spain.

Bombay, July 18.

There were five and twelve attacks, and eight and twelve deaths respectively from plague in Bombay reported on Saturday and Sunday.

Bombay, July 19.

There were 10 attacks and 10 deaths from plague reported yesterday.

Karachi, July 18.

Returns for the 17th show cases 3, deaths 1. Returns for the 18th show cases 6, deaths 4.

SUPPLEMENT.

Contributed articles on important themes and items of news will be thankfully received. All communications should be addressed to the Editor, Nur Afshan, Ludhiana.

RATES OF SUBSCRIPTION.

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